MAIN LAKE PROVINCIAL PARK

PURPOSE STATEMENT AND ZONING PLAN

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Approved by:

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Date: Mar 31/03

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Purpose Statement and Zoning Plan

Primary Role
The **primary** role of Main Lake Park is to protect a biologically diverse freshwater island lake system, which incorporates the protection of natural vegetation, fish and wildlife species, associated habitat, and fragile karst features. The Main Lake chain of interconnected lakes forms the second largest freshwater lake system on the west coast of Canada. Over 72 bird species and 234 plant species inhabit the area, several of which are rare and endangered. The wildlife in Main Lake Park include wolves, cougars, frogs, owls, bald eagles, hawks, osprey, peregrine falcons, cormorants, and wintering swans. The park protects sensitive fish bearing streams with cutthroat trout, prickly sculpin, threespine stickleback, coho, kokanee, sockeye salmon, and rainbow trout. It also protects karst features from the Quatsino Formation, including underground streams, caves, sinkholes, and colourful limestone outcroppings.

Secondary Role
The **secondary** role is to provide a destination for canoe/small boat recreation on the Gulf Islands. This high quality freshwater lake system provides single and multi day water-based opportunities for visitors to the northern Gulf Islands. It is one of the few canoeing destinations in a freshwater lake system in the Vancouver Island/Lower Mainland area.

Main Lake Park is located on Quadra Island, a short ferry ride from Campbell River. It is accessed via paved and gravel roads approximately 22 km from Quathiaski Cove, the main settlement on Quadra Island. A small parking lot and natural boat ramp at the south end of Mine Lake provides park access to seven wilderness campsites. The park can also be accessed by small boat via adjacent Village Bay Lake, or by portaging from the ocean at Yeatman Bay. The lake system can be as strenuous as one chooses, with the opportunity to access two different lakes from Main Lake. Opportunities for horseback riding, hiking, swimming, fishing, and nature and cultural appreciation in a semi-wilderness area within close proximity to population centres add to the features of this park which is the largest in the Gulf Islands.

Tertiary role
The **tertiary** role is to represent the natural environment. Main Lake Park is the second largest contributor to the Outer Fiordland Ecosection (OUF) and the Coastal Western Hemlock xm2 biogeoclimatic variant, both of which are under represented in the protected areas system. The park protects old growth remnants and mature second growth stands of these ecosystems.

Management Issues

Known Management Issue	Response
Lack of detailed knowledge of natural and cultural values	➢ Conduct research to determine spawning sensitivity in all of the inlets. ➢ Conduct a creel survey to better understand the sport fishing pressures in the park. ➢ Inventory flora for rare species. ➢ Consult with Ministry of Forests on karst research

	available for the area, and map karst features in the park. ➢ Conduct a traditional use study and cultural inventory in conjunction with First Nations.
Impact of recreation on natural values (e.g. scouring impact on reeds and erosion of shallows, water quality, creek bed damage from ATVs, random campfires, litter, motorized boating group size and levels of use)	➢ Post park as closed to ATV use and provide educational information on damage to creeks. ➢ Close Clear Creek to canoe and boat use during peak spawning periods through signage and public education. ➢ Post a low speed limit through the shallows. ➢ Implement BRIM to monitor impacts on trails and camping areas. ➢ Through parking lot and boat launch design, restrict the size of boats and trailers to encourage small boat use.
Impact of adjacent uses, such as logging and cottages, on natural values.	➢ Work with Ministry of Forests and logging companies to ensure park values are taken into consideration during forestry development. ➢ Work with local community to develop an appreciation for park values and to limit impact on park.
Enforcement problems with horsepower restrictions	➢ Continue working with Coast Guard and Regional Districts to maintain boat motor and speed restrictions.
Camp Homewood not under park use permit and their use is expanding to other parts of the park	➢ Replace the BC Lands of Occupation for Homewood with a Park Use Permit. ➢ Include restrictions in Park Use Permit on activities that may damage vegetation.
Inadequate facilities for level of use	➢ Install an information shelter at the boat launch with a map and park use guidelines. ➢ Investigate option to develop a day use area.
Private inholdings	➢ Acquire private inholdings to protect park values.
First Nations relations	➢ Initiate working relationship with First Nations to reach a mutual understanding of park management interests.

Zoning

Natural Environment Zone – covers the entire park (3,424 hectares). The objective of this zone is to protect scenic values and to provide recreation opportunities in a largely undisturbed natural environment. This zoning allows for a range of compatible recreational activities, while providing the Environmental Stewardship Branch with the ability to manage potential impacts on known natural and cultural values.

Conservation

Representation - ecosection	☒	Main Lake Park is the 2nd largest (24.5%) out of 16 protected areas that contribute to the representation of the Outer Fiordland Ecosection (OUF), which is under represented in the protected areas system at 3.3%. East Redonda Island Ecological Reserve is the largest contributor with 42.8%.
- biogeoclimatic subzone/variant	☒	Main Lake Park is the 2nd largest (15.3%) out of 30 protected areas that contribute to the overall representation of CWHxm2, which has only 4.1% protected provincially. Strathcona Park is the largest contributor with about 51%.
Special Features	☒	Large lake system, rare elements, biodiversity, salmon bearing streams, karst features, remnant old growth
Rare/Endangered Values	☒	*Red-listed* double-breasted cormorant. *Blue-listed* northern pygmy owl, wintering trumpeter swans, coastal cutthroat trout, red-legged frog.
Scientific/Research Opportunities	☒	Inventory of biodiversity and rare species, salmon

Recreation

Representation backcountry	☒	Canoe circuit, wilderness camping
destination	☒	Multi-day water based trips, largest lake in the Gulf Islands, nature appreciation
travel corridor	☒	Part of Inside Passage route; portage trail for kayakers
local recreation	☒	Canoeing and nature appreciation
Special Opportunities	☒	Unique wilderness opportunities in close proximity to a highly populated area
Education/Interpretation Opportunities	☒	Appreciation of pictographs, karst features, salmon spawning, lakes, wildlife and the interaction of marine and freshwater ecosystems

Cultural Heritage

Representation	☒	Mining history, transportation routes
Special Feature	☒	Pictographs of uncertain origin in red ochre on Main Lake, old portage route from Yeatman Bay, old mine site adjacent to Stramberg Lake

Other Management Considerations

Other Designations	☐	Not Applicable
Relationship to other PAs	☒	Part of a system of protected areas on the Gulf Islands, and northern Gulf Islands/Desolation Sound area
Co-operative Management Arrangements	☐	Not Applicable
Partnerships	☒	Quadra Island Trails Committee
Vulnerability	☒	Natural and recreation values are vulnerable to high levels of recreation use, motorized boats and ATVs, water quality contamination, and removal of botanical products. Cultural values are threatened by vandalism.
Relationship to other Strategies	☒	Created as a result of recommendations of the Vancouver Island Land Use Plan Goal 2 process

Area: 3,424 hectares (2,988 ha land; 466 ha water)

Date of establishment: April 30, 1996

Zoning Map - Main Lake Provincial Park

Projection: Albers Equal Areas
Datum: NAD83

Natural Environment
Protected Area Boundary

0 1
km

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